

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, EAID, BG, US

SUBJECT: BANGALEE MINISTERS MEET AMERICAN SECRETARIES

REF: DACCA 4273

1. BSS, THE OFFICIAL NEWS SERVICE, REPORTS MEETINGS BETWEEN SECRETARY KISSINGER AND BANGALEE FOREIGN MINISTER ABU SAYEED CHOWDHURY (SEPTEMBER 6) AND AGRICULTURE SECRETARY BUTZ AND BANGALEE FINANCE MINISTER A.R. MALLICK (SEPTEMBER 3).

2. REPORTAGE ON MEETING WITH CHOWDHURY, WHICH APPEARED SEPTEMBER 8, IS SPAREST POSSIBLE MENTION OF FACT THAT MEETING HELD AND "BILATERAL ISSUES" DISCUSSED. IN CONTRAST, COVERAGE OF MALLICK'S MEETING WITH SECRETARY BUTZ, WHICH REPORTED SEPTEMBER 7, IS CAPTIONED BY SUCH HEADLINES AS "U.S. FOOD AID ON PRIORITY BASIS IS ASSURED" AND "2 LAKH TONS OF U.S. FOOD SOUGHT". BSS ACCOUNT READS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE: WASHINGTON, SEPT. 6: - "BANGLADESH IS A TENDER SPOT IN OUR HEART AS FAR AS ITS FOOD REQUIREMENT IS CONCERNED AND WILL RECEIVE TOP PRIORITY IN OUR PROGRAMME OF CONCESSIONAL FOOD ASSISTANCE", OBSERVED MR. EARL BUTZ, U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE WHEN THE FINANCE MINISTER DR. A.R. MALLICK CALLED ON HIM IN

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WASHINGTON SEPTEMBER 3, REPORTS BSS.

DURING DISCUSSION DR. MALLICK SAID THAT U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS GRANTED BANGLADESH NEARLY TWO MILLION TONS OF FOOD ON CONCESSIONAL TERMS SINCE ITS INDEPENDENCE. REFERRING TO FOOD DEFICIT FOR 1975-76, THE FINANCE MINISTER URGED UPON MR. BUTZ TO ALLOCATE 100,000 (SIC) TONS OF FOODGRAINS UNDER PL 480 TITLE I PROGRAMME AND AT LEAST ANOTHER 100,000 TONS OF FOODGRAINS UNDER TITLE 2 PROGRAMME.

DR. MALLICK ALSO DREW ATTENTION OF SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE MR. EARL BUTZ TO THE SCARCITY OF EDIBLE OIL IN BANGLADESH AND REQUESTED ALLOCATION OF 100,000 TONS DURING CURRENT FISCAL YEAR. REFERRING TO REQUIREMENT OF RAW COTTON WHICH IS THPLD MAJOR ITEM OF IMPORT IN BANGLADESH, THE FINANCE MINISTER REQUESTED FOR ALLOCATION OF 200,000 BALES OF RAW COTTON UNDER TITLE 1 PROGRAMME.

MR. BUTZ OBSERVED DURING DISCUSSION THAT WITH PROSPECT OF FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION REMAINING BRIGHT IN U.S., U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN AT LEAST SAME LEVEL ASSISTANCE THAT WAS GRANTED LAST YEAR, IF NOT MORE. MR. BUTZ SHOWED KEEN INTEREST IN BANGLADESH PROGRAMME OF ATTAINING SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD PRODUCTION. END QUOTE.

3. WE HAVE SEEN NO NEWS REPORTS OF ANY MEETING BETWEEN MALLICK AND AID ADMINISTRATOR PARKER (REFTEL).
BOSTER

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